

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (amended) A method of converting municipal solid waste into a useful compost material, the method comprising the following steps:

- providing a stream of solid waste for treatment;
- extracting ~~valuable~~ select materials from the solid waste;
- scanning the remaining solid waste with a Geiger counter to detect the presence or absence of radioactive materials;
- removing any detected radioactive materials from the solid waste;
- grinding the solid waste into particles of 1 millimeter or less;
- transferring the ground solid waste into a drum;
- adding manure and sludge to the drum and thereafter sealing the drum;
- rotating the drum to mix the ground solid waste, manure and sludge;
- sterilizing the contents of the drum by adding steam in an amount sufficient to pressurize and heat the drum to 120° for approximately 37 ~~minuets~~ minutes;
- permitting the drum to cool for a period of 10 to 30 minutes and thereafter depressurizing the drum by venting the remaining steam;
- removing the contents of the drum.

2. (originally presented) The method as described in claim 1 wherein an enzymatic solution is added during one of the steps to facilitate degradation of the solid waste.

3. (originally presented) The method as described in claim 1 wherein nitrogen is added to assist in sterilizing the solid waste.

4. (amended) A method of converting municipal solid waste into a useful compost material, the method comprising the following steps:

providing a stream of solid waste for treatment, including both inorganic and organic materials;

grinding the solid waste into particles;

transferring the ground solid waste into a drum;

adding manure and/or sludge to the drum and thereafter sealing the drum;

rotating the drum to mix the ground solid waste, manure and/or sludge;

sterilizing the contents of the drum by adding steam;

permitting the drum to cool and thereafter depressurizing the drum by venting the remaining steam;

removing the contents of the drum;

wherein all the steps of the method are completed within a 24 hour period;
and wherein the method converts both organic and inorganic materials into useful
compost material.

5. (originally presented) The method as described in claim 4 wherein prior to grinding the solid waste it is scanned with a Geiger counter to detect the presence or absence of radioactive materials and wherein any detected radioactive materials are removed from the solid waste.

6. (amended) The method as described in claim 4 wherein prior to grinding ~~valuable~~ selected materials are removed from the solid waste.

7. (originally presented) The method as described in claim 4 wherein during sterilization steam is added in an amount sufficient to heat the drum to 120° for approximately 37 minuets.

8. (newly presented) A method of converting municipal solid waste into a useful compost material, the method comprising the following steps:

providing a stream of solid waste for treatment;

grinding the solid waste into particles;

transferring the ground solid waste into a drum;
adding manure and/or sludge to the drum and thereafter sealing the drum;
rotating the drum to mix the ground solid waste, manure and/or sludge;
sterilizing the contents of the drum by adding steam;
permitting the drum to cool and thereafter depressurizing the drum by
venting the remaining steam;
removing the contents of the drum; and
wherein prior to grinding the solid waste it is scanned with a Geiger counter
to detect the presence or absence of radioactive materials and wherein any detected
radioactive materials are removed from the solid waste.